

S.N.
08/722742

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An endoscope is provided that comprises a micro-size video camera, a flexible cable attached to the camera comprising fiber optical means for transmitting light to illuminate the site viewed by the camera and electrical conductors for transmitting electronic signals generated by the camera in response to images viewed by the camera, and a malleable or rigid shaft detachably connected to and supporting said camera and said cable. The rigid shaft may be straight or may be preformed in a selected curved configuration. In an alternative embodiment of the invention, a malleable shaft is permanently attached to said camera. Using a malleable shaft offers the advantage that the shaft is manually manipulable into various configurations to facilitate access to different surgical sites, with the shaft having the ability to remain in each selected configuration until manually reformed into another configuration. Using a detachable shaft provides the advantage that different shafts may be used with the same camera to provide different endoscope configurations for different applications.